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Fig. 2. The Hancock House, Beacon Street, Boston, MA, c. 1863. One of the preservation movement's earliest battles was waged in 1863 against the demolition of the Hancock House (built c. 1737). Although the house was ultimately torn down, many of its architectural features were salvaged and auctioned off. Among those architectural elements saved and later donated to SPNEA are numerous balusters, dado, and paneling. Photo by Edward Lamson Henry, courtesy the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

tains nearly every variety of shutter hook and lock imaginable.

During his tenure at SPNEA, Abbott Lowell Cummings concentrated much of his efforts on collecting evidence of First Period (1625-1725) building fabric and construction. The policy of requiring good provenance and documentation with accessions, established under Appleton, continued under Cummings' direction.

Thus, nearly every architectural element in SPNEA's collection is supported by some form of documentation. Whether there are *in situ* photographs (figure 2) or measured drawings, correspondence or notes made upon acquisition, or details published in *Old-Time New England*, the context for the object is explained through this documentation. Information on historic associations, such as maker, architect, former owners, or historic events, all combine to form an understanding of the architectural element beyond its physical or design aspects.

One obvious advantage of a collection of architectural elements which have been removed from their original locations is that it affords both technological, geographical, and temporal comparative possibilities. The technology used in wood carving, turning, and assembly can be examined through balusters and various ornamental features. Endless fragments of plaster and over 100 bricks might be examined for the nature of their constituent materials over

a broad geographical range.

Recent use of the architectural elements at SPNEA has included the examination by North Bennet Street School's preservation carpentry students of portions of the Jaffrey House (c. 1724, demolished in 1924). Once one of the grandest early Georgian houses in Portsmouth, NH, the Jaffrey House's woodwork, doors, sash windows, and other fabric are now preserved in SPNEA's architectural elements collection. The students were able to examine the craftsmanship of the original material and then replicate the Jaffrey House parlor for SPNEA's recent furniture show, *Portsmouth Furniture: Masterworks from the New Hampshire Seacoast*.

The collection has also been used by graduate students engaged in research, such as an inspection of the workmanship of carved objects by Boston's Skillins family or the design of colonial wrought iron hinges. Further, those engaged in restoration have also found SPNEA's architec-

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tural elements collection invaluable. Information on such diverse topics as early exterior stucco, or rough-cast, and late-18th-century window sash profiles from rural Vermont have been sought.

Intent on displaying the artifactual evidence collected from New England buildings, Appleton installed some of the larger architectural elements, such as porticos and staircases, in a small barn on an SPNEA property. Less formal a display than the subsequent ones, this barn represents the first display of SPNEA's architectural elements, a well-articulated desire of William Sumner Appleton from the beginning.

In 1960, in celebration of SPNEA's 50th anniversary, the first formal exhibit of architectural artifacts was installed by Abbott Lowell Cummings at the Otis House (c. 1796), the free-standing federal house that serves as SPNEA's headquarters in Boston. The exhibit was on view for 15 years and formed the basis for a second installation, mounted in 1981. Until 1986, this second exhibit strongly influenced visitors to the Otis House. Whether stumbling upon the museum while waiting for a tour or attending a meeting in the museum, this installation of structural, functional, and ornamental building material proved to be enjoyable and instructive.

A prime user of the second architectural exhibit was SPNEA's Education Department. The department's program "Classic Times" used the architectural exhibit to begin teaching elementary school children the vocabulary of neoclassical design through finding, observing and illustrating certain attributes. Placed in the context of the c. 1796 Otis House, the exhibit enabled children to see and understand the continuity of neoclassical design in art, furniture, and architecture. Other regular users of the architectural exhibit included Boston University's Preservation Studies Program, through which graduate students were introduced to the range of artifacts and issues available for further study. For most of this century, SPNEA's architectural elements were

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ly two-thirds of the collection remains to be entered in ANCS. Resource management records, such as field notes, photographs, and sketches, need to be cataloged according to archival standards being incorporated into ANCS.⁶ Adapting ANCS to allow cross-referencing of artifacts and resource management records would permit ready access to all the rich architectural resources the park has to offer.

Continued research and development of the collection, as outlined above, is hampered by financial constraints. But these projects can provide valuable training for students of historic preservation, museum studies, and related fields. There are opportunities for cooperation between professional organizations or academic programs and the park. Preparing, preserving, and promoting the artifacts as an object archive, and encouraging outside research and programming, may be park's best course of action on a limited budget.

The Independence National Historical Park Architectural Study Collection is available, by appointment, to professionals and students in architectural and historical fields. Call 215-597-7085 for further information.

¹ Charles E. Peterson, "The Wide World of Windows: Notes Issued for a Visit to the Independence Architectural Study Collection" (Philadelphia, November 17, 1989, photocopy), 13 pp. Mr. Peterson often uses this phrase to sum up the importance of architectural study collections.

² Lee H. Nelson and Penelope Hartshorne Batcheler, "A Proclamation" (INDE, August 24, 1970, Typescript).

³ Lee H. Nelson, "Nail Chronology as an Aid to Dating Old Buildings," *History News* 24, (November 1968): *Technical Leaflet* 48.

⁴ Natica Schmeder, "Evolution of the Mechanical Systems of 315 South American Street, Philadelphia," term paper, University of Pennsylvania, May 1991; Elise Vider, "Early American Locks," term paper, University of Pennsylvania, December 1989.

⁵ Carl Nittinger, "A Primary Resource for the Restoration, Reconstruction and/or Replication of 18th & Early 19th Century Architectural Elements: The Architectural Study Collection of Independence National Historical Park," Master's thesis, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania, 1991.

⁶ National Park Service, *Museum Handbook, Part II* (April 29, 1993, Draft), Appendix D:1-6.

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Webster, Richard. *Philadelphia Preserved: Catalog of the Historic American Buildings Survey*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981. Synopses of Philadelphia HABS reports; indicates when, and what, artifacts from a property are in the park study collection. Seventeen entries are listed in the index. Copies of all entries are on file at the park.

John Marks, a museum intern hired by the Friends of Independence National Historical Park (INHP) to inventory the architectural study collection at the park, is a 1992 graduate of the Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies with an emphasis on the management and interpretation of collections.

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stored in a large barn (which has since been dismantled). Currently, the collection is divided among two other barns and a warehouse. SPNEA's central storage warehouse offers a secure, fireproof, and climate-controlled environment for all the society's collections, including many of the architectural elements. Here, as well as in the two barns, objects are arranged primarily by type and size.

Presently, architectural elements are acquired almost exclusively through donations, many of the objects coming from buildings undergoing demolition or restoration. SPNEA's current collecting and cataloging policies regarding all collections are applicable to the architectural elements collection as well. That is, the artifact must contribute to our further understanding of the material culture of New England.

All of the architectural elements in the collection have been catalogued, detailing location, description (material, size, shape, condition, etc) and historic associations (structure from which the element came, maker, donor, etc). The cataloging information on each object is then entered into the Collection Department's computer database.

Accessibility to the collection through the database is impressive. All objects, architectural elements included, can be tracked using almost any attribute or factor, including location, material, donor, type and building. In the near future, images including those from the archival collection, will also be integrated into the database. Through this integration on the computer of the architectural elements collection with other SPNEA collections and archival information, an even larger contextual picture for all the collections, including the architectural elements, can be drawn.

¹ Floyd, Margaret Henderson. "Measured Drawings of the Hancock House by John Hubbard Sturgis: A Legacy to the Colonial Revival." in *Architecture in Colonial Massachusetts*. Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1979, page 88.

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